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Recommended Citation

"Odets, Clifford, Letter." (2018). *Correspondence*. 79.
http://dh.howard.edu/og_corres/79

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CLIFFORD ODETS

May 13, 1949

Dear Mr. Whipper:

"My brother and my brother-in-law and four other men are in the death house in Trenton, N. J. for a crime they didn't do.."

When Bessie Mitchell wrote me these lines the other day I was so moved and angry that I felt impelled to answer her simple, human plea for help.

That is why I am sending you a copy of her letter. I feel sure that it will move you as it has moved me.

Six innocent men have been sentenced to die. Of what are they guilty? Of being black. What is the evidence against them? "Confessions" torn from innocent men by brutal force. "Confessions" that are undeniably invalidated by the testimony of the defendants' employers and repudiated by these men in open court.

This is a Northern Scottsboro case - a lynching Jersey style. It is the way the law supports Jim Crow. It is the government's answer to the American Negro's striving for freedom and human dignity.

O. John Rogge and Earl B. Dickerson, two of the country's outstanding attorneys, have been retained to argue the case on behalf of the condemned men. An appeal is now pending before the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

I urge you to join with me to help save these men. Won't you send me your contribution today? Tomorrow can be too late.

Sincerely,

Clifford Odets

Checks may be made payable directly to Bessie Mitchell or to the Committee to Free The Trenton Six and mailed to me, Suite 1613, 205 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y.

Dear Mr Odets,

My name is Bessie Mitchell. My brother and my brother in law and four other men are in the death house in Trenton N. J. for a crime they did not do.

Maybe you read about the case. Some people call it the case of the Trenton six.

The lawyer Mr Rogge says its as bad or maybe worse than anything that ever happen down south.

For months I went around looking for help. I went to many organizations. I even went to the F.B.I. But nobody would help. They told me everything would turn out all right.

But my brother and the other five men were sentenced to the electric chair.

Then I heard about the Civil Rights Congress, and I went and told them my story.

And now a lot of people know what the police in Trenton tried to do.

Only the people can save my brother. That's why I am asking you to help.

Thank you.

Appreicative,

Bessie Mitchell